

THE PREPARATION OF SPECIALISTS FOR TOURISM SPHERE

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Abstract

As tourism developed and became an integral part of a modern life its international value increased and the national governments have started to play more and more important role - their activity covered a wide range of problems from an infrastructure before functions of regulation. One of the major directions in the role of the government of Georgia to develop tourism in the country should be the introduction of the modern educational system in the field of tourism and promotion of its development. The preparation of tourism specialists and raising the preparation of their quality must be based on the technological progress made in this field and the specifics of labor spent. Following the above-mentioned, we can conclude that the present level of the tourism education and staff training in the tourist sector of Georgia fails to meet the international demands of tourism industry either quantitatively, or qualitatively. The present situation on the market of tourist service education needs urgent measures, particularly to improve its qualitative indicators.

Keywords: Tourism, Education, Business

Introduction:

As it is known, in XX century the education was considered to be the most important and prestigious area of human activities. Therefore, the education and knowledge have become a capital. By itself, it also means that the modern society needs a substantively conceptual knowledge and, accordingly, a new model of education. In the XXI century one great dignity of people-oriented education has already been emphasized. It is an accentuation on the possibility to receive a continuous education throughout the life.

Travel service is a major field of people's service and has specific social-health function. It includes understanding vocational, historical and cultural sightseeing, sport life, participation in the cultural-mass events; it also promotes the personal development and makes various cultures be closer to each other.

Georgia with its geographical location, the best climate and historical-cultural heritage is considered as a host country of tourists and requires the development in the relevant direction of business development. The competitive usage of potential of Georgian tourism is based on tourism personnel and the quality of their preparation.

We think, preparation of specialists for tourism sphere opens qualitatively new boundaries in the developed countries of the world; therefore, the system analysis of functioning of the given didactic system will be extremely useful to Georgia which possesses significant tourist potential and can become in the long term one of the most developed tourist countries.

One of the major problems in modern Georgia is decrease in the quality of a human resources. Sharp decline in employment resulted in reduction the motivation for learning. Success of a choice and training (study) of students in higher educational institutions of Georgia is influenced by many factors. The main thing is that it is necessary to approve as the purpose -

quality and efficiency of tourist formation to guarantee quality and efficiency in the industry of tourism. Processes of globalization in all spheres of human activity is extended on sphere of the international tourism, changing its role and influence on preparation of specialists of the given sphere: it demands depth, interactions of its various components at more complex didactic level.

As it is generally known, the World Tourism Organization together with other public organizations spends greater work on activization of tourist activity. WTO on General Assembly in Santiago (Chile) on October 1, 1999 accepted "The Global Ethical Code of Tourism" which became the basic document that defined all activity of this organization for many years. "The key role of education at a new stage of development of tourism, in the opinion of the Council of WTO by education, consists in development of new problems"²³³.

At the present stage of development of the mankind there is an intensive concentration on theoretical knowledge; it becomes a basis of changes in manufacture, and finally - in a society. Creation of modern information society is an instinct of self-preservation of the mankind as the biological kind, modified now in the particular socially-organizational form of life of people. In the center of attention there also is a theme "Formation and qualification - the purposes of tomorrow"²³⁴. Therefore, now in the developed countries of the world, programs of employment of population, vocational training and retraining, improvement of professional skills are developed until 2020.

In this connection, it is necessary to continue work on perfection of the list of directions of preparation of experts and specialists of professional higher education, having approached it to similar lists of the developed countries with the purpose of creating favorable conditions for integration of the Georgian education system in international; to define a legal status of Bachelor and Master programs on specializations of a tourist structure; to finish development of the complete set of methodical support of the state educational standards of professional higher education. For this purpose, it is necessary to change qualifying requirements promptly enough. "It is important to introduce new means of training and a hardware of educational institutions as a whole, to strengthen a theoretical part of training and to raise its cognitive value not only in an educational institution, but also on a workplace"²³⁵. For decision of these problems it is necessary to overcome the problem of lacking highly skilled teachers, scientists and experts for vocational training in which our country tests significant deficiency, as well as consequences of demographic changes. Development of qualifying requirements has precisely allocated necessary parts between vocational training and formation of the scheme of workplaces. From the point of view of the internal maintenance of the given actions from the governments of the developed countries the understanding grows that investments into human resources, formation and a science will grow.

It is necessary to note that the major documents on the tourism accepted by the World Tourist Organization or with its participation focus tourists on such contacts which would assist the present dialogue based on mutual understanding and mutual trust. It concerns Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980), Acapulco Document (1982), the Charter of Tourism and the Code of the Tourist (1985), the Hague Declaration Concerning Tourism (1989), the Montreal Declaration (1996), the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, etc. In these documents, necessity of tolerant forms of dialogue with the population of host countries and the population with the arrived tourists is emphasized. The important problem of tourism considers achievement of higher level of respect and trust between all people. In particular in Acapulco Document it is marked that tourism should assist spirit of validity, harmony and respect between people and promote knowledge of the world.

²³³ Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE), "Hospitality: "A Look at the Future", Hosteur, Vol. 4 (1), 1994.

²³⁴ Choy D. F., "The Quality of Tourism Employment", Tourism Management, 1995.

²³⁵ Cynthia Mayo, PhD, Hospitality & Tourism management redefined: a new perspective for the 21st century Hosteur. Vol. 17, issue 1, 2008

The tourism development policy should rely on the study of the three parts (education, science, business innovation) of knowledge triangle and if they do not exist, promote their creation and the effective interaction among them.²³⁶ Therefore, the effective decision of a problem of competence of experts of the sphere of tourism has demanded to define qualitative characteristics of the expert. As a result of the system analysis of functioning of didactic systems of preparation of experts of the sphere of tourism in the developed countries of the world, qualitative characteristics of experts which are general for all regions and spheres of tourist activity that allows to define modern model of such expert have been revealed. In each qualifying model there should be official duties; an educational level, volume of knowledge and volume of skills, also some personal qualities promoting more successful professional career. In our research, modern approaches to qualitative preparation of experts that assumes consideration of structure of work, the detailed analysis of professional functions of experts, revealing of the skills necessary for their performance are analyzed. Managers need to develop better skills in the sphere of personnel administration. In connection with constant internationalization of business, all experts of tourism are required to have more practice in the international space and a multicultural background.

In our opinion, in this multidimensional problem it is possible to investigate: theoretical and methodological ways of preparation of experts of a tourist structure on the integrated groups of trades; structure and the maintenance of curricula and programs; development of standards and qualifying characteristics for these professional groups; methodological and didactic maintenance of preparation of experts; development of techniques of training which provide interactive dialogue; development of modular rates and programs of training for each trade in view of innovative technologies and methodologies on the basis of the combination of such disciplines, as pedagogis, psychology, sociology, philosophy, history and methods of an individualization of training.

Despite the fact that most of the high educational institutions in Georgia train tourism specialists, the number of schools with tourism professions oriented on the training of the professional staff of the average and low levels is few in our country, while the demand for them is high and exceeds the number specialists with higher education.

Innovative educational technologies are the most important tools needed to compete with other social institutions. The content and delivery methods and techniques of modern social-economic situations are crucial in helping young people get a positive approach to education. Innovations are a key factor leading to integration between education and science. It is the main instrument to improve the quality of education.

Field study tours are regularly organized for tourism students of the School of Business and Management of Grigol Robakidze University which promote the efficient synthesis of theoretical and practical knowledge. Particularly, in the summer of 2012 with the funding of the university a field study tour was held in Khevsureti. The second level tourism students participated in this project. The students visited Gudani, Shatili, Mutso castle and Ardoti. A field study tour was also organized in Armazi in which the first level tourism students participated. Such tours help students gain practical experience in planning, designing and mastering a guide specialty.

For tourism students of Grigol Robakidze University “TURINET” (Tourism development network) - a training/seminar on the project “Help volunteering in public organizations” was organized. The project was conducted with the support of Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Within the frames of the project a three-month contract was signed with the students interested in. Rural families interested in family type guest houses or tourism and hospitality (who have the willingness to be engaged in this business as well as an appropriate potential for it) were questioned by the volunteers using

²³⁶ Cathy Hsu C.H, Global Tourism Higher Education: Past, Present, and Future, New York: Routledge, 2011.

the preliminary worked out questionnaire. The volunteer students received certificates. The project will be continued in the future.

Invited experts in tourism conduct the lectures on the problems of tourism development and its perspectives in Georgia for tourism students. The sustainable development of tourism as a vision for the future is considered by them which should be managed by the local population for social, economic and ecological purposes. The students engaged in this project are actively talking with the experts of this field and are discussing the perspectives of tourism development and thus, once again deepen the theoretical and practical knowledge gained within the program. In order to develop Bachelor programs in tourism and quality assurance, a practical component of the program is enhanced, in particular, the Memorandum of Cooperation between “Grigol Robakidze University” and “European Public College of Tourism, Regional Development and Informatics” was signed. This means that the parties will jointly develop and implement targeted projects and the students of both parties will be involved in this project. In particular, study tours to the various tourist destinations are planned, joint seminars with participation of local and foreign experts promoting the enhancement of both theoretical and practical parts are organized. For the enhancement of students practice and internship, the Agreement of Cooperation between “Grigol Robakidze University” and Ltd “Newkaz” (Tourism development center) was signed. This means provision of the students involved in this project with practice facilities.

The interuniversity conferences were held at the University, in which the students involved in the program participated. The participation of students in such events promotes the development of research and communication skills, the formulation of a qualified decision-making and initiatives and their effective presentation before the audience.

Conclusion:

Preparation of tourism specialists and raising the preparation of their quality must be based on the technological progress made in this field and the specifics of labor spent. Following the above-mentioned, we can conclude that the present level of the tourism education and staff training in the tourist sector of Georgia fails to meet the international demands of tourism industry both quantitatively and qualitatively. The present situation on the market of tourist service education needs urgent measures, particularly to improve its qualitative indicators.

We think, preparation of specialists of tourism will be extremely useful to Georgia which possesses significant tourist potential and can become in the long term one of the most developed tourist countries.

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